



# *Iowa Outdoors*

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
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## **BOWHUNTERS STEP UP TO HELP WITH IOWA WILDLIFE SURVEY**

**BOONE** – More than 1,700 Iowa bowhunters participated in the first ever Iowa Bowhunter Observation Survey during the 2004 deer hunting season.

The randomly selected bowhunters from across the state were asked to record the number of hours they hunted and the number of deer and selected furbearers they observed while hunting. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received observations from over 27,000 hunting trips, which provided nearly 95,000 hours of observational data. The data is being used to supplement existing deer population data and to examine population trends of selected furbearers over time.

In addition to deer, bowhunters were asked to record the number of badgers, bobcats, cats, coyotes, gray fox, opossum, otters, raccoons, red fox and skunks. Results from the survey were calculated for each of the 9 climate regions of the state.

“The amount of information provided by the bowhunters is much greater than what we could ever obtain with our biologists, technicians, and conservation officers,” said Steve Roberts, DNR wildlife research biologist who collaborated on the study with William Clark, professor at Iowa State University. He said bowhunters donated the equivalent of 12,000 workdays during the survey. “Their efforts were just phenomenal.”

“It’s really satisfying to know that many of Iowa’s bowhunters do care about conservation, which is obvious because of their willingness to participate in the survey,” Roberts said. “I have received many positive comments from bowhunters about this survey, and we are hopeful that even more bowhunters will participate in future years. This is, by far, the most popular survey that I have conducted.”

Roberts said he and Clark believed avid bowhunters would be the best hunters to select for the survey because they would hunt often and tend to have the most experience in selecting good stand locations. They would also be more likely to control or mask human scent, use camouflage, identify animals correctly, and return the survey.

Surveys were sent to a random sample of bowhunters who obtained bow-hunting licenses each year during 2001, 2002, and 2003. Roberts and Clark made every attempt to distribute the survey evenly across the state.

Results from this survey will be online at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) by early next week.

**For more information, contact Roberts at 515-432-2823.**

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## **TRAPSHOOTING EXCELLENCE**

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

A grunt. A gunshot. Another clay bird evaporates into dust. Up and down the line at the Iowa Trapshooting Association (ITA) championships this month, the scene was repeated tens of thousands of times.

Each summer, the weeklong state shoot attracts participants from across the country and beyond. "They come from all over Iowa and the upper Midwest, from Oregon, New York; all over the U.S. as well as Canada and Australia; about 1,300 shooters this year," tallied ITA coordinator Phil Thyer. "This Iowa shoot has been going on for 129 years. It's normally the third or fourth largest in the country."

Half the 400 trophies go to out of state competitors. Many shooters are on a circuit, travelling by recreational vehicle from shoot to shoot; culminating in the mid-August national championships in Vandalia, Ohio. Those RVs crowded the camping area, behind the mile-long trap range, near Janesville. With vendors hawking everything from several thousand dollar trap guns to T-shirts, ice cream bars and women's jewelry, the whole area takes on a county fair atmosphere. This isn't a week of rest and relaxation, though. The shooters here get serious, when they step up to the line.

"On the singles we shot this morning, we had class AAA, AA, A, B, C and D. Every competition was won with 100 straight (targets broken) except for the D Class," said Thyer. "We had phenomenal scores. When I figured out the results, about 45 percent of the shooters today broke 98, 99 or 100...with 11 percent breaking all 100." Categories also include juniors, sub-juniors, ladies, veterans and senior veterans.

Partial credit for the bird-busting accuracy goes to a \$260,000 investment by the ITA, installing 'patrap' automatic target throwers. "They allow us to set a really consistent target. Everybody has the same look. The targets will be the same height all the way across," explained Thyer. "With the old hand sets, some might have come out a little higher or lower; the wind could have affected them a little. It allows everybody the chance to break a good score."

But most of the credit goes to the shooters stretched out across the 34 trap fields, each field with five concrete strip stations. Shooters compete from 16 to 27 yards out. It is 'practice make perfect' times 1,300, as they raise custom built guns to shoulders. "The more proficient shooter will shoot immediately," said Thyer. "Most try to look out in infinity. That's because your eye comes back to your gun more quickly. The sooner the eye sees the target, the sooner they move back to the gun. Some people just shoot quicker than others."

Top Guns here, in flighted competitions similar to golf tournaments, can take home up to \$5,000. And the firepower here helps hunting and wildlife programs, even though no one strays from the clay-strewn fields during the week while shooting. The shells that they buy carry the same federal excise tax as shells purchased by hunters ahead of opening day. That, and other related purchases chips in \$50,000 or so to the Pittman-Robertson trust fund, which is apportioned back to the states.

But the real dollar signs are in the local economy, which feeds, lodges and provides other services to these specialized tourists. "Normally, we figure the economic rollover is \$2 million. This year, though, with extra shooters, we figure it will be as high as \$3 million," estimates Thyer. "It's like a small town here; campers for a full mile with other camping spots filled in the area. Hotels are full. It's quite a boom for the community."

That's a boom that sticks around, too, long after the shooting range is silent again.

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of August 16, 2005**

**[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com)**

**For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.**

### **Northeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15:** Water level in the tailwater at Lansing is 7.74 feet and steady. Guttenberg on Monday morning was at 4.00 feet and steady. Bellevue

was 4.30 feet and slowly dropping with a water temperature of 78 degrees. Bait shops are reporting slower fishing over the past week, but there is plenty of action to be had. With low water levels, anglers should concentrate on fishing the wing dams along the main channel border. Lower water levels can make it easier to locate the wing dams by the current break and the rock along the shoreline.

Walleye fishing has been slow over the past week in **Pools 9 to 15**. Fish a night crawler or crankbait along the wing dams. A few sauger are being caught in the tailwaters below **Lock and Dam 10**, but both size and numbers being caught are down.

Bluegill fishing has been good in **Pools 9 to 15** for anglers who can locate fish. Concentrate around wood or rock structure or along vegetation in the backwaters and running sloughs and suspend a piece of night crawler 4 to 5 feet below the surface. Near shore, fish along the rocks bordering the main channel and drift a piece of worm a foot or two below a bobber for bluegills. Bluegills are staging along the wing dams. Float a piece of night crawler on the bottom next to the wing dams, but move if you don't get a bite within 15 minutes. Minnesota Slough in **Pool 9** has produced good fishing for bluegills.

Crappie fishing is fair in **Pools 11 to 15**. Fish for crappies in the backwater sloughs or along the main channel border in areas with little or no current. Fish along woody structure and cast a tube jig or minnow 3 to 5 feet below the surface of the water. In **Pool 11**, anglers have been catching crappie under submerged trees in the Cassville Slough.

Fishing for freshwater drum (sheephead) has been fair to good in **Pools 9 to 15**. Use a night crawler fished on the bottom in front of wing dams and side sloughs for drum. Move until you find fish.

Channel catfishing has been fair to good in **Pools 9 to 15**. Anglers are using stink baits and night crawlers fished in deep and shallow water habitats. Some anglers like to fish for catfish along the face of the wing dams or in the deep water behind the outside edges of the wing dams using stink baits. When fishing for catfish, be ready to move if you don't have a bite within the first 15 minutes.

Yellow perch are being caught in Minnesota Slough (**Pool 9**).

Cast spinner baits or crankbaits along the face of the wing dams in **Pools 9 to 11** for smallmouth bass.

Fishing for largemouth bass in **Pools 12 to 15** has been fair to good using top-water lures, spinner baits and crankbaits fished around rocky shorelines in out-of-current areas or the main channel border in areas with less current. Bass are also being taken in vegetated areas in the backwaters using top-water lures and spinner baits.

Fair to good white bass fishing is being reported in **Pools 12 to 15** with fish up to 18 inches being reported. Fish in and around the wing dams using small spinner baits or jigs thrown into the current. White bass can often be found chasing minnows to the surface. Cast a twister tail, rattle trap or small spinner bait (any imitation minnow lure) into the melee.

**Cedar River** (Black Hawk): Channel catfish are being caught using chicken liver, night crawlers and prepared baits (stink baits) drifted over the riffle areas. A few walleyes are being caught on lead-head jigs tipped with a night crawler.

**Cedar River** (Floyd and Mitchell): Walleyes are hitting night crawlers on small hooks and bright-colored jigs. Smallmouth bass are biting on spinner baits and dark-colored jigs.

**Maquoketa River** (Delaware and Jones): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on jigs and night crawlers fished in the river above Lake Delhi and in the catch-and-release area below the Lake Delhi Dam.

**Wapsipinicon River** (Buchanan): Channel catfish are biting on chicken liver and stink bait. Anglers are catching a few walleye on jig and night crawler combinations. Bluegills are also biting on a piece of night crawler.

**Big Woods Lake** (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is fair drifting minnows 4 to 6 feet below the surface of the water.

**Black Hawk County Lakes** (including Big Woods, George Wyth, Mitchell, and South Prairie): Largemouth bass are hitting top-water lures fished in the evening.

**Lake Delhi** (Delaware): Bluegill fishing is good using worms fished around the brush piles.

**Lake Meyer** (Winnebago): Bluegill fishing is good on a piece of night crawler fished under a bobber next to structure.

**Lake Hendricks** (Howard): Largemouth bass are hitting plastic worms and jigs fished along the weed lines in the early morning hours. A few crappies are also being caught.

**Silver Lake** (Delaware): Bluegill fishing is good on night crawlers fished on the bottom.

**Volga Lake** (Fayette): Bluegills are good on small jigs and worms. Suspend your lure 3 to 5 feet below a slip bobber and fish next to structure.

**Trout Streams:** There are many excellent trout streams to **take kids fishing** in August and early September and they include Little Paint, Glovers, Bloody Run, Trout Run, Twin Springs, and the Turkey River. All of these streams are stocked regularly and flow through *easily accessible park-like settings* making it easy to enjoy. For specific dates for announced stream stockings on these and other unique trout streams, call the trout stocking hotline or go to the web page listed below. In case you can't make it during the week, remember that Bailey's Ford and Richmond Springs are stocked every Saturday morning through the first week of September and the Turkey River is stocked every Saturday through the end of September. Even if you can't make it to the stream on the day it is stocked, there are always plenty of trout in the streams to fish for.

For current trout stocking information, contact the Iowa DNR at 563-927-5736 or go on-line at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) and check the fisheries web pages to view the 2005 stocking calendar.

**For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.**

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Fishing overall has been slow. A few walleyes are being caught drifting live bait on the main lake and some fish are coming off the grade. A few perch are being caught along the weed line on the south end. Smallmouth fishing is

slow. Most activity is occurring on the east side around Big Stoney, Little Stoney and Red Nose Point. Try using small grub style baits.

**West Okoboji** (Dickinson): Perch fishing has been good around Eagle Point using wax worms. Bluegill fishing has been good in the North Bay, Hayward's Bay and the reef from Pocahontas Point to Eagle Point. Small jigs tipped with a small piece of worm or leech will produce fish.

**Willow Creek** (Osceola): Catfishing has been good using chicken liver around the trees near the dam.

**Fairview Pond** (Sioux): Catfishing has been fair around the creek channel on the east side using night crawlers or chicken liver. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair using crankbaits in 10 to 12 feet of water.

**West Fork of the Des Moines River** (Emmett): Channel catfishing has been good using shrimp or night crawlers in pool areas.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass are hitting night crawlers and small minnows in the deep water around the Island and Dodge's Point.

**Beeds Lake** (Franklin): Crappies are suspended in the deeper water and can be caught using small jigs and minnows. Most fish are between 7 and 10 inches.

**Boone River** (Hamilton): Channel catfish are hitting on night crawlers, chicken liver and stink bait.

**Little Wall Lake** (Hamilton): Channel catfish are being caught on chicken liver and stink bait.

**Crystal Lake** (Hancock): Channel catfish are hitting on stink bait and chicken liver. Fishing in the evening to early morning hours produces the best action.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Fishing for 2 to 3 pound channel catfish is good using stink bait. Fishing is fair for bullheads using night crawlers.

**North Twin Lake** (Calhoun): Fishing is good for big bluegills using small brightly colored lead-heads, especially chartreuse. Fishing is also good for big yellow bass using the same approach as bluegills. Channel catfish fishing is good.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): Fishing is fair for catfish using various baits. Anglers are catching a few white bass by casting into shad schools.

**Yellow Smoke Lake** (Crawford): Fishing is fair for big bluegills. Fishing is good for 2 to 3 pound catfish using chicken liver. A few white bass, up to 18 inches, have been caught drifting with lead-heads and small Rapalas.

**Crawford Creek** (Ida): Fishing is good for 7 to 8-inch bluegill in deeper water and off the face of the dam.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): Quality bluegills have been caught throughout the lake. Fish about a foot off the bottom. Some nice catfish have been caught along the shoreline and the face of the dam near the spillway.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

### **Southwest**

**Don Williams** (Boone): Channel catfish fishing has been good using chicken liver and night crawlers. Bluegill fishing has been good to excellent on worms. Anglers have caught a few nice sized crappies.

**Hickory Grove (Story):** Channel catfish fishing has good using chicken liver, with the best fishing in the early morning or evening. Bluegill fishing has been fair with worms. Crappie fishing has been slow to fair with jigs. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair to good during the early morning in deeper water.

**Rock Creek (Jasper):** Channel catfish fishing has been fair on worms and/or chicken liver. Largemouth bass have been biting on top-water lures.

**Big Creek (Polk):** Bluegill fishing has been good with worms. Channel catfish fishing has been good, particularly at night, with some nice-sized fish in the lake.

**Easter Lake (Polk):** Channel catfish fishing has been fair using worms and/or chicken liver. Crappie fishing has been slow with jigs. Bluegill fishing has been fair using worms and bobbers. Fishing is good for smaller largemouth bass using plastic worms and top-water lures.

**Saylorville Lake (Polk):** White bass fishing has been fair to good in various areas. Walleye fishing has been fair, particularly in the Cherry Glen area. Channel catfish fishing has been good, with the best areas north of the mile-long bridge.

**Below Saylorville Dam (Polk):** White bass/wiper fishing has been good using jigs and/or minnows, and 12 to 16-inch walleyes are reported throughout the river. Channel catfish fishing has been good from Saylorville dam to Cottonwood.

**Lake Red Rock (Marion):** Channel catfish fishing has been slow to fair using traditional baits, with the better areas in the upper portions of the reservoir. Crappie fishing has been slow, although some nice sized fish are being taken with jigs and minnows. White bass fishing has been slow, although should pick up with the warmer weather.

**Below Lake Red Rock (Marion):** Anglers report white bass fishing has been good using jigs and jigs and minnows in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has been slow, but some nice fish have been caught.

**Roberts Creek (Marion):** Channel catfish fishing has been fair near the outlet using chicken liver or other traditional baits.

**Lake Ahquabi (Warren):** Channel catfish fishing has been good using chicken liver, night crawlers and stink bait. Largemouth bass fishing has been good using plastic worms and spinner lures, although most have been below the minimum length limit. Bluegill fishing has been slow with most fish taken on worms and wax worms.

**Hooper Lake (Warren):** Channel catfish fishing has been fair using chicken liver and stink baits. Largemouth bass fishing has been slow using plastic worms and spinner lures. Bluegill fishing has been slow using worms and bobbers around structure.

**Green Valley (Union):** Bluegills and crappies can be caught on tube jigs, night crawlers or wax worms in 6 to 8 feet of water around cover. Channel catfish are biting on liver or night crawlers.

**Three Mile (Union):** Channel catfish can be caught on liver and night crawlers in the bays on the outside of the weed line. Bluegill fishing is fair using night crawlers on the outside of the weed line or around the flooded trees. Some crappies are being caught from the flooded trees on about 6 to 10 feet of water.

**Fogle Lake (Ringgold):** Some crappies are being caught around the flooded trees in 5 to 9 feet of water. Some channel catfish can be caught using night crawlers along the shore.

**Little River** (Decatur): A few crappies are being caught from the flooded trees. Some channel catfish can be caught using liver.

**Icaria** (Adams): Channel catfish up to 18 inches are being caught using liver or dip baits.

**Viking** (Montgomery): Crappie fishing is good using a small jig or minnow and bobber in 6 to 8 feet of water around structure. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using plastic baits with a slow retrieve. Channel catfish are being caught using liver and stink bait in early morning and late evening.

**Anita** (Cass): Channel catfish fishing is good. The lake is five feet low and boat ramps are not useable.

**Cold Springs** (Cass): Channel catfish fishing is slow but a few are being caught using liver in the evenings. Crappie fishing is fair around sunken trees. Bluegills are being caught with small jigs around structure.

**Manawa** (Pottawattamie): Channel catfish is fair using stink bait and liver on Boy Scout Island and the west shore. Walleyes have slowed but a few are being caught along west shore in evening drifting night crawlers.

**Orient** (Adair): Fishing is slow for 7 to 8-inch crappies drifting jigs and minnows. Channel catfish are being caught using liver in early morning and late afternoon. Bluegills are slow but are still being caught drifting night crawlers.

**Mormon Trail** (Adair): Channel catfishing is fair using liver or minnows in the evening. A few bluegills are being caught drifting jigs tipped with worms. Largemouth bass are being caught around structure.

**Greenfield** (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair drifting a jig tipped with night crawler. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using spinner baits. Catfish is fair using liver.

**Meadow** (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair for 8 inch fish using night crawlers around sunken trees or by drifting a small jig tipped with a night crawler.

**Littlefield** (Audubon): Bluegill fishing is fair. Try drifting a night crawler in 4 to 5 feet of water. Crappie fishing has slowed but some are still being caught using minnows and bobbers. Most crappies are 10 inches in length. Channel catfishing is fair using prepared dip bait and liver close to shore in rocks.

**Prairie Rose** (Shelby): Crappies and bluegill are slow, but can still be caught along rocky shorelines. Channel catfish are being caught in evening using dead minnows or liver. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using crankbaits and plastic worms.

**DeSoto Bend** (Harrison): Walleye fishing is slow, but are still being caught jigging minnows around brush piles and trolling crankbaits in evening in 6 to 8 feet of water. Channel catfish are being caught using liver in evening.

**Willow** (Harrison): Bluegills are being caught using worms. Channel catfish are good being caught in the evening using liver.

**For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

### **Southeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19:** Fishing on the Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19 has been fair. At the gauging station on **Pool 16** (near Muscatine) the water temperature is 80 degrees and the river pool stage is 11.27 feet and is expected to remain stable over the next several days. In **Pools 16 to 19**, fishing for channel catfish has been good on a



variety of baits with worms, leeches, liver, shad guts and crushed minnows working the best. Bluegill fishing has been fair in all accessible backwaters, below the spillways on the dams, and in some side channel areas. Bluegills are being caught on redworms, worms, wax worms, and small jigs and bobber rigs. Anglers are starting to catch a few walleye around the wing dams and near the tailwaters. Anglers are catching a few crappies near Credit Island (**Pool 16**) and in **Pool 19**. Largemouth bass and smallmouth bass fishing has been fair on **Pool 19** and below Dam 19.

**Lake Odessa** (Louisa): The inlet structure remains open providing fresh water to the lake. Water temperature is in the upper 80s. Look for some catfish to be around the inlet and on the riverside of the outlet.

**Lake Darling** (Washington): Catfishing is good in the evenings and early mornings on chicken liver. Concentrate around the riprap where the fish are feeding on young bluegills. Don't be surprised to find a few nice flatheads in the same areas.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): Look for bluegills around the ledges in 10 to 13 feet of water. Also try trolling for crappies using a three-way swivel rig and a minnow.

**Lake Belva Deer** (Keokuk): Bluegills are suspended in 10 to 12 feet of water. Ice fishing jigs and wax worms are catching them. Concentrate around the trees near the creek channel.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): Walleyes have been hitting on vertically jigged presentations over the underwater islands and by trolling crankbaits in the same areas. Crappies have been biting on jig and minnow presentations fished around deep structure.

**Lake Hawthorn** (Mahaska): Crappies have been biting on a jig and minnow with the best success around deep structure. Some sorting is required for quality size fish. Channel catfish have been biting on liver and stink bait.

**Lake Sugema** (Van Buren): Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial presentations. Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs.

**Lake Wapello** (Davis): Largemouth bass have been hitting on crankbaits and spinnerbaits. Channel catfish have been hitting on stink bait and liver. Bluegills have been biting small jigs drifted through 14 feet of water.

**Diamond Lake** (Poweshiek): Channel catfish fishing has been good during warm summer days. Try chicken liver or night crawlers for best results. Bluegills and crappies can also be caught on the deeper structure on small jigs and wax worms.

**Hannen Lake** (Benton): Once again, catfish are biting on night crawlers and liver. Bluegills are also being taken from deeper water on small worms.

**Lake Macbride** (Johnson): Bluegills remain in the shallows and are willing to bite on small jigs or worms. Channel catfish are being taken in the slightly deeper, rocky areas on liver or sunfish.

**Rodgers Lake** (Benton): Try liver, night crawlers or stink bait for channel catfish.

**Pleasant Creek** (Linn): Troll crankbaits over rocky areas deeper water for walleyes. Largemouth bass are being caught on a variety of artificial lures and chubs.

**Skunk River** (Keokuk and Washington): Last week's rain brought the river back up. Boating should be easy enough and catfish should be looking for food that is still coming down the creek channels.

**Iowa River** (Louisa): The river is up just a little from last week's rain so boating will still be pretty rough. Look to the bigger brush piles for fish trying to keep cool.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

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